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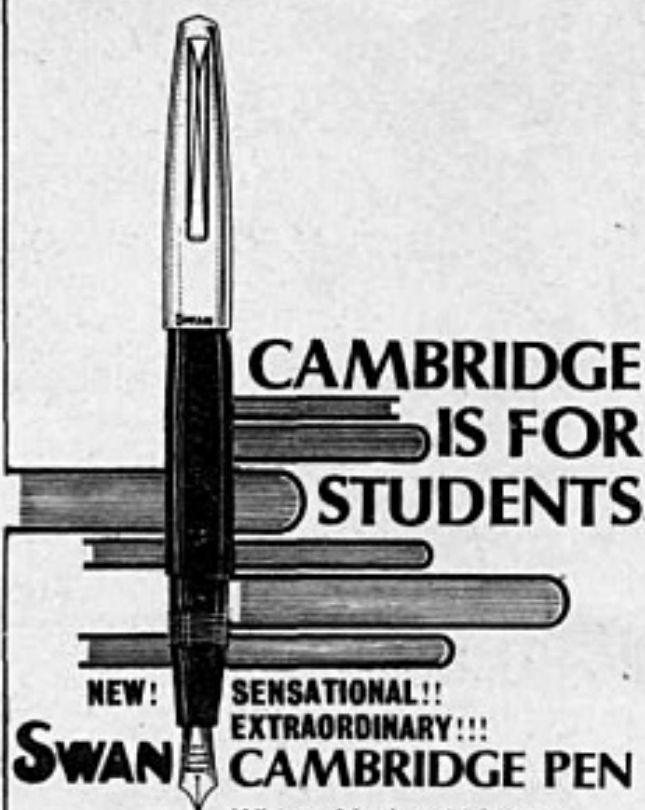
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# CHANDAMAMA

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## TWO STRONG MEN

In a certain village there lived a man who was constantly boasting of his strength. He told his wife, "Do you know who I am? I am the reincarnation of that legendary strong man Bhima!"

His wife said, "You say you are the reincarnation of that great Bhima. What will you do if indeed that very Bhima challenges you?"

Without batting an eyelid, the boaster replied, "What will I do? Foolish woman, I shall fell him with a single blow of my fist."

After some days his wife said, "Why don't you fight someone here in this village and establish your right as the strongest man in these parts?"

So he asked, "Is there a man stronger than I? Show me one and I shall fight him willingly."

The wife replied, "I have heard that there is a great giant

in the nearby forest. I don't know where he lives. Go, find him and win over him if you can."

Some days after this conversation, the wife of the boaster went to the well to draw water. She dropped the bucket into the well, but could not pull it up.

Just then another woman carrying a child on her hip, saw her strenuous efforts to draw water from the well.

"Well, sister, what is the matter? Can't you draw up any water?"

"No, I've been trying hard enough. I think there is a demon in the well which is holding on to the bucket. That's why I can't draw up any water."

"Is that so, sister. Let me try."

The other woman set her child on the ground. The little boy ran up and pulled at the

rope and the bucket came up quite easily. The boaster's wife was amazed to see such strength in a little child. She found out that the other woman was the wife of a man called Mahasakthi. The boaster's wife came home and related her amazing experience to her husband.

"If that Mahasakthi's son can be so strong, how much stronger will the father be? As I said, there is one who is stronger than you are. If that little lad can bring up a heavy bucket, I am sure the father can lift a whole mountain."

The boaster became annoyed at such words. He pounded on the table and shouted. "I'll catch that Mahasakthi and grind

his nose in the dust. You just wait and see."

But his wife beseeched him not to challenge Mahasakthi to a fight as surely he would come to grief. But the boaster did not pay heed to her and like a mad man rushed off into the forest. His wife followed him.

On the way, he came to the well and reminded of his wife's account leaned into the well to see what lurked at the bottom. Then he dropped a bucket down and when it was full tried to bring it up. But try as he might, he could not raise it even an inch. He huffed and puffed but the bucket remained at the bottom.



Then Mahasakthi's wife arrived and sent her boy down. Immediately the little fellow tugged at the rope and the bucket came up easily.

The boaster's wife nudged her husband and whispered, "Satisfied?"

But the boaster said, "This is some kind of magic. Where is this Mahasakthi? I must see him!"

On hearing this, Mahasakthi's wife said, "Sir, please don't try to meet my husband. If you do, great harm will come to you."

But the boaster all unmindful of her warning followed her to the house of Mahasakthi.

On reaching Mahasakthi's home, the boaster was asked to hide in a large jar. Mahasakthi's wife said to the boaster, "Sir, my husband is immensely strong. It will not be easy to fight him. In fact, when you see him, you'll run away out of sheer fright. Every day, he has an elephant for breakfast. He'll snuff your life out with a flick of his forefinger."

The boaster hid in the jar which was so big that he felt like a small ant in it.

As twilight approached, a sound like the rumbling of thun-



der was heard. Soon a violent wind began to blow. All this heralded the arrival of Mahasakthi who came into the room, sniffed the air and declared, "I smell the blood of a human here."

"Nonsense", replied his wife, "it is your own smell, that's all. Come and eat. But first wash your hands and feet."

As soon as Mahasakthi had gone out, she whispered to the boaster to escape from there. The boaster did not waste even a single minute.

With a single bound he was through the door and away. He sprinted as fast as his legs could carry him. But Maha-

sakthi had spotted him and bellowing in rage began to chase him.

The boaster ran and ran until he could run no more. Just then he saw an immense troll enjoying its meal of human flesh and bone. The poor boaster now realised that he was falling from the flying pan into the fire. If Mahasakthi caught him, he would be reduced to pulp. If the troll caught him, he would make a morsel of food for the monster. What will he do?

The troll looked up and catching sight of the boaster bellowed angrily, "Aha! Who goes there?"

Just then Mahasakthi appeared and the troll noting the speed with which the former was travelling thought it was being attacked. So it advanced to

meet Mahasakthi and soon a battle ensued.

The poor boaster, now thoroughly frightened clambered up a tree and hid in the branches.

The troll and Mahasakthi fought like two ferocious animals. All night long they showed blows on each other. When dawn broke, the two enemies still fighting vanished into the skies. The entire sky resounded to the thunder of their battle. But the boaster could not determine who had won, because the antagonists never reappeared.

The boaster came home a much chastened man. From that day on, he ceased his boasting and became humble. Whenever the sky rumbled he would inform his neighbours that Mahasakthi and the troll were up there, still fighting it out.



# SIDI BABA AND THE SEVENTEEN CAMELS

One day, an Arab whose name was Sidi Baba was riding through the Sahara Desert. He was making a journey to a distant town, where he had some business to do. Now the desert is hot and dry and Sidi Baba was glad when he saw a group of palm trees in the distance, for he knew that he was approaching an oasis, one of the few places in the desert where there was water. When he arrived at the oasis, he was surprised to see a group of camels and three young men, who were having a heated discussion. As he approached, he saw that they had come to blows and the voices of all three had become loud and shrill.

"This won't do," said one.

"I certainly won't agree," said another.

"You are trying to cheat me out of my share," said the first man, "and I will not agree."

"This is a terrible problem," said the third man. "Neither

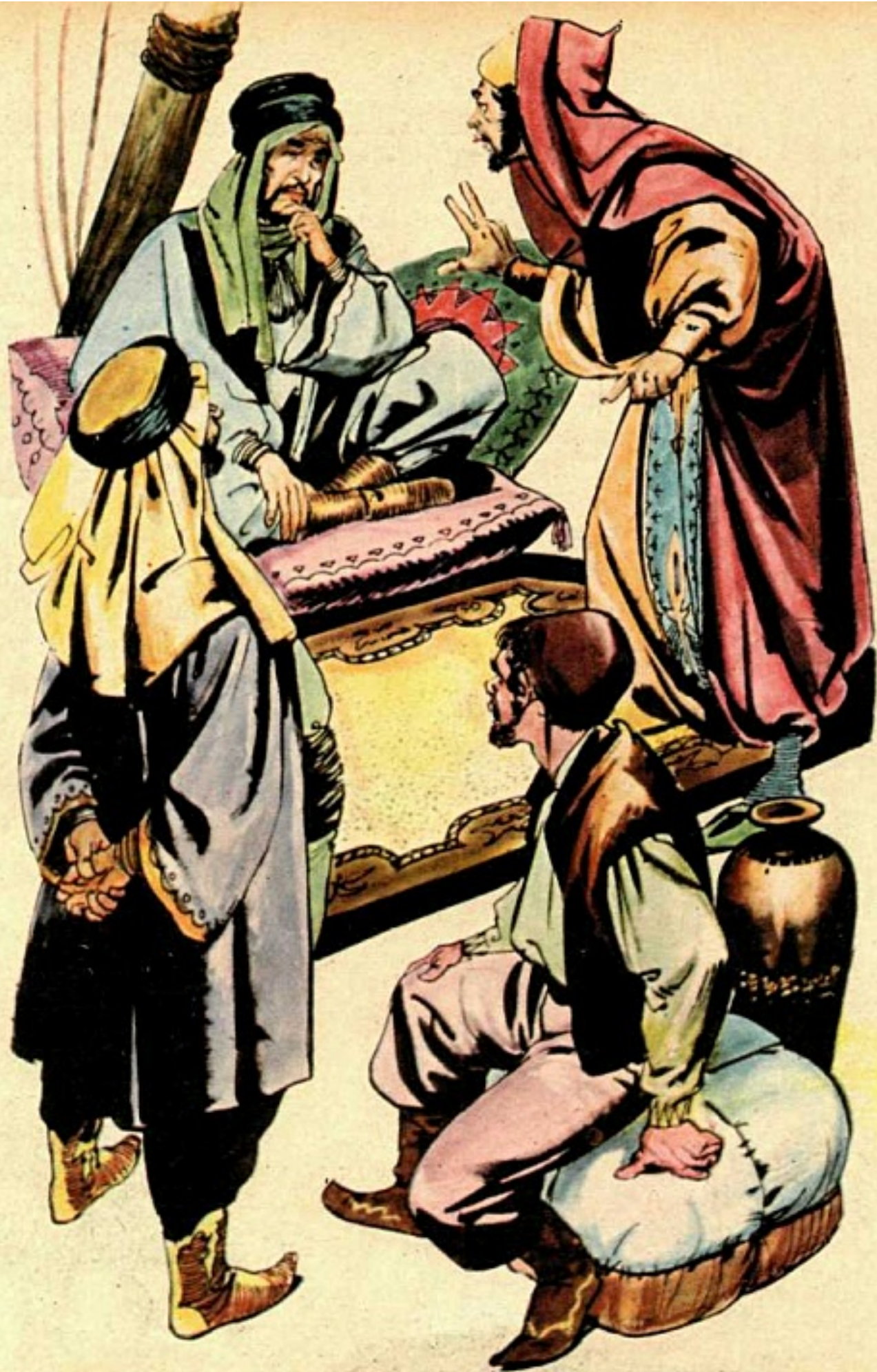
of you can suggest how to solve it, so what can we do?"

Sidi was very curious and he wanted to know what was causing so much trouble, so he got off his camel and went over to them.

Two of the men were facing each other angrily and Sidi asked the third, who seemed to be the eldest, what was the matter.

The third man replied, "My father has just died. He left these seventeen camels which you see here. He said they must be divided among the three of us like this: I am to have half, as I am the eldest son. My younger brother gets a third of the camels and my third brother has a ninth. We have tried many ways, but we cannot divide up the camels, so that each one gets his proper share, without cutting up one of the camels and that would never do. Can you help us?"

Sidi Baba went to the bro-



ther's tent and sat down and thought for a while. Then he said, "I think I can solve your problem. First we will add my camel to yours."

He went out to the group of seventeen camels and put his own camel among them. "Now," said Sidi, "there are eighteen camels. It is easy to find half of eighteen. That is nine, so nine must go to the eldest son."

The eldest son took his nine camels. He was curious to know how Sidi Baba could share out the camels so that everyone was satisfied, but very pleased with his share of nine camels.

"Now," said Sidi, "a third of eighteen is six, so there are six camels for the second son."

The second son took his six camels, well pleased with the deal.

"Now the ninth part of eighteen is two," said Sidi. "Two camels go to the youngest son."

The youngest son took his two camels. The eldest son had taken nine, the second son had taken six and the third son had taken two. Added together, this made seventeen (try adding it up for yourself and see). There was one camel over and Sidi Baba took this one, because it was his anyway.

The three brothers were delighted that they had met such a clever man as Sidi Baba, who could solve their problem for them and wanted to give him gifts, but Sidi would accept only a bag of dates for his camel. Then with a wave of his hand, he rode off into the desert again, to continue his journey.





# THE VANISHING SISTERS

There was once an old woman who had three daughters and a young son, all of whom she loved very much.

One day, the eldest daughter was walking in a meadow, which ran down to a stream from the side of the house. When she reached the stream she saw a beautiful flower growing on one of its banks. She thought that this flower would make a lovely surprise gift for her mother, so she bent down to pick it, but as soon as her hand touched the stem of the plant the girl disappeared into thin air.

Next morning, the mother sent out the second youngest

daughter to look for her elder sister. The girl went out into the meadow, calling her sister's name as she went. As she walked along a path through the meadow, she saw a branch of roses trailing across it. As she bent down to lift them out of the way, she could not resist picking one of the lovely flowers. In a moment, just like her sister, she too had disappeared into thin air.

Next morning, the youngest daughter set off in search of her two sisters, but she had not gone far when she picked a branch of jasmine that lay across her path and she, too, disappeared.

The old woman was now only left with one young son. He was tall and strong for his age and one night he told his mother that he had decided to go out into the world and



look for his sisters, whom he had loved very much.

The following morning, he collected his few belongings together and kissing his mother goodbye, he set out to find his lost sisters.

One day, the boy was walking along a country road, when he came upon three big lads fighting in the middle of it. He stopped and asked them what they were fighting about. They told him that they were brothers and their father, who had died recently, had left them a pair of boots, a key and a cap. Whoever put on the boots and wished that he was in a certain place would be carried there by magic. Whoever wore the

cap would be invisible to anybody else and the key would open any lock or door in the world.

None of the brothers could decide who should have what and the eldest brother, being rather greedy, claimed that all three things belonged to him.

"I will settle this argument," said the young boy. "I will throw a stone as far as I can and the first one to reach it and bring it back to me, shall have the three things that your father has left you."

This sounded the best way to settle the argument and the brothers agreed to do as the young boy had said. The boy picked up a stone and flung it as far as he could and the three brothers raced after it. While they were gone, the young boy quickly snatched up the key and the cap and put on the boots.

"Take me to where my sisters are," he commanded.

Almost immediately, he found himself standing in the hall of a very large castle. Glancing through an open door, in one of the corridors, he saw a lady, dressed in the finest clothes, standing in the middle of the room.

The young boy recognised

her at once as his long-lost sister. She was delighted to see him and she told him how happy she was. She had the finest clothes in the land and she was married to a very handsome man, but there was one thing that spoilt her life. Her husband had been put under a spell by a wicked monster

and he had to spend half his life as a bird, flying through the air.

As the young boy listened to his sister's sad story, a door opened at the end of the room and a bird flew in. At once, the boy put on his magic cap and he became invisible. As he watched, he saw his sister



fetch a golden bowl from the table and the bird flew into it. When it reappeared it had changed into a handsome young man, but parts of his body were covered with feathers. "This must be my sister's husband," thought the young boy and he took off his cap and reappeared.

The husband was very pleased to see the young boy and taking a feather from his bird's skin, he gave it to the young lad, saying, "If ever you are in danger or need help hold this feather and say, 'Come help me, King of the Birds' and I will come to your aid."

The young boy thanked him and after saying goodbye to his sister and her husband he told his magic boots to take him to his second sister. Sure enough, the boots took him to see the second eldest sister, who was also happily married. However, her husband had also been put under a magic spell by a wicked monster and he had to spend half his life as a fish, swimming about in the seas of the World.

When the husband returned home that evening his wife introduced him to her young brother. He was very pleased

to meet the young boy and taking a fish scale from his body, gave it to the boy, saying, "If you ever need help, hold this fish scale and say, 'Come and help me, King of the Fishes' and I will come to help you as quickly as I can."

Saying goodbye, the young boy set off yet again, this time in search of his youngest sister. With the help of the boots he soon found her, but she was not so happy as her two sisters. She told her brother that she had been carried off by a horrible sea monster, who had kept her prisoner, because she refused to marry him. There was nothing that she could do to be set free because it was impossible for the monster to die



After hearing his poor sister's sad tale the young boy said, "Ask him why he cannot die."

At that moment the sea monster returned to the cave, so the young boy quickly put on his magic cap and became invisible.

The girl turned to the sea monster and said, "I will marry you if you will tell why it is you cannot die."

"To kill me you would have to find an iron casket that lies at the bottom of the sea," replied the monster. "Locked inside the casket is a white dove. You would have to find the egg that it has laid and break it against my head if you wanted to kill me."

Now that she had the answer to her brother's question, the young girl begged the monster to delay the wedding for another three days and he agreed.

As soon as he had left the cave the boy took off his magic cap and became visible again. He told his sister not to worry and then he went down to the sea shore and taking the fish scale in his hand, he called to the King of the Fishes for help. The great fish heard his story and promised to help. He called all the fishes together and asked



each one if they had seen the iron casket.

The last fish to arrive was a little lady sardine. She was the only one to have seen the casket and she was able to guide all the other fishes to it.

They brought the casket to the boy standing on the sea shore. He opened it with his magic key. As he lifted the lid he saw the white dove, but before he could catch it in his hand it escaped and flew up into the sky.

The young boy remembered the feather his eldest sister's husband had given him. Taking it from his pocket he called on the King of the Birds to help him. The king called all the



birds together and the last one to arrive was a white dove, who apologised for being late, but a friend of his had called on him.

He led the boy and the King of the Birds back to his nest and there they found the dove's egg.

The young boy took the egg and rushed back to the cave where his sister was waiting for him. He explained his plan to her and when the monster came in from the sea, the girl let him rest his head on her lap. The boy crept up beside the monster and smashed the egg on his head.

With a rumble like thunder

the horrible monster rolled over on his back and died.

At the same time the husbands of the other two sisters were turned back into their normal shapes and were freed of the magic spell, which had been put on them by the sea monster.

The daughters sent for their mother at once and she came to live in the castle with the eldest one. The youngest girl found so much money inside the monster's cave that she was able to live in comfort for the rest of her life. When the son grew up he married a beautiful girl and the whole family was able to live happily ever after.



# HUMAN NATURE

At the beginning of Creation, a sage called Aranyaka thought that the World should consist of human beings only. No other creature should live on earth.

So he prayed to Lord Brahma, the Creator, and from him received the boon which enabled him to change all lower creatures into human beings.

One day he saw a tiger chasing a deer. Quick as thought, he changed the deer into a lovely maiden and the tiger into a handsome young man.

The young man fell in love with the lovely maiden and wanted to marry her. She too, wanted to wed him. So Aranyaka thought his plan had succeeded. He celebrated the wedding between the two. The young couple built a cottage in the middle of the forest and lived there happily.

The man went out to hunt everyday. He brought back the carcasses of animals he had slain but his wife did not eat meat and contented herself by eating the fruits and vegetables that grew wild in the forest. In fact, she hated the idea of eating flesh and tried to dissuade her husband from eating meat.

The husband was fond of animal flesh and could not understand the vegetarian habits of his wife. So they began to quarrel over their food habits. In course of time, they had several sons and daughters. Some of them inherited their father's qualities and some imbibed the traits of their mother.

But the husband began to get violent as the days went by. One day after a bitter quarrel, he flew into an uncontrollable rage and picking up his bow



notched an arrow to kill his wife. She for her part took fright and ran from the cottage as fast as her legs could carry her. Finally, she bolted into Aranyaka's hermitage with her ferocious husband close at her heels.

Aranyaka tried to pacify the warring couple. "If you fight like this, how can you live together in peace? What do you wish? To live together in peace and harmony or to go your separate ways?"

Husband and wife exclaimed in one breath that they wanted

to live apart from each other.

So Aranyaka gave to each one a leaf and said. "When this leaf dries; you'll regain your original forms."

After some time the leaves dried up and the two humans regained their animal forms. The wife became a deer once more and the man became a ferocious tiger. The chase began all over again.

But their descendants retained their human forms and all the animal like qualities of their ancestors.

## WHAT'S YOUR SCORE?

### ANSWERS

- |                                  |                   |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. JOSIP BROZ                    | 8. ADOLF HITLER   |
| 2. VAN GOGH                      | 9. VENUS          |
| 3. THE MARSEILLAISE              | 10. CYRILLIC      |
| 4. ALBUMEN                       | 11. UNDER WATER   |
| 5. WODEN, KING OF THE NORSE GODS | 12. THIN          |
| 6. HELSINKI                      | 13. CHLOROPHYLL   |
| 7. TEN                           | 14. COLOGNE       |
|                                  | 15. BOTH ARE TRUE |



With Robin Hood and the outlaws of Sherwood Forest in hiding behind him, King Richard Lion Heart boldly faced Robert the Wolf and the Normans. He tried to stop any fighting by offering them a free pardon.

Robert the Wolf would not listen. If he could get rid of Richard Lion Heart he would become the most powerful man in England. He urged his knights to fight. "Richard is king of the Saxons, not our King!" he cried: "Forward!"



The king kept on pleading with Robert the Wolf but could not get him to surrender. He realised there would have to be a fight and he called to Robin. "Call up your men, Robin," he said, and teach this Norman a lesson.



It was a great shock to the Normans when all the outlaws rose up out of the bushes where they had been hiding all the time. The Normans never knew they were there. Little John, Much the Miller and the Friar led the bold attack! Robert the Wolf spurred his horse and charged forward intent on killing the king.

"This is the end for you, Richard Lion Heart," he cried, as he thundered down on the king. He swung his gleaming sword and aimed a savage blow at Richard's head, but the king dodged cleverly. The Norman's attempt had failed.





Robin's men had only their staves and their bows and arrows with which to fight against their enemies' swords and spears. But they gave a good account of themselves and Robin urged them on to victory. Suddenly the king shouted "Look out, Robin! the baron is coming this way."



Robin turned sharply and saw the Norman riding furiously towards him. Coolly he fitted an arrow to his long bow. "We will teach the Norman yet another lesson—in archery," he declared, as he took aim at Robert the Wolf!



The king urged Robin Hood to take cover as he had no armour and stood little chance against the well armed Norman baron. "Do not fear, Sire," shouted Robin. "My trusty bow will be more than a match for our Norman baron."

It all happened in the twinkling of an eye. Robin had no time to take careful aim but in spite of that, his arrow sped straight and true to its mark. It hit the Norman on the chest, and the impact sent him crashing out of his saddle.



It was the end for Robert the Wolf. He fell lifeless to the ground pierced by Robin's arrow. His horse took fright and galloped away through the trees of the forest. Meanwhile the battle went on between the Normans and the outlaws.



One of the Norman knights saw their leader fall and shouted, "Robert the Wolf has fallen. Throw down your arms." So the battle came to an end and the Normans surrendered sullenly to the king. Robin showed King Richard the fallen Norman baron and so now had avenged his father's death.



"I have to thank you for this victory, Robin," said the king. "It is a good thing that there are loyal and true men in England like you and your outlaws. I shall grant you all a pardon so that you will be outlaws no longer."



They took the Norman prisoners into Nottingham and the townsfolk were very surprised to see them. The outlaws marched through the streets with Robin and the king at their head, cheering loudly and merrily all the way. Inside Nottingham Castle, the Sheriff waited fearfully for King Richard!

When Robin and the king stood before him, the Sheriff dropped to his knees and begged for mercy. The king was merciful and as the Sheriff swore to be loyal in future, he was forgiven. King Richard had to return to London and Robin and his men sped him on his way with loud cheers!



*A New Robin Hood Story Begins in Next Issue*

# PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST

Here is an opportunity to win a cash prize!  
Winning captions will be announced in the November issue



Photo by Mr. D. N. Prasad



Photo by Mr. B. Shankar

- These two photographs are somewhat related. Can you think of suitable captions? Could be single words, or several words, but the two captions must be related to each other.
- Rs. 20 will be awarded as prize for the best caption. Remember, your entry must reach us by 30th September.
- Write your entry on a post card, give your full name, address, age and post to :

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**CHANDAMAMA MAGAZINE**  
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## Result of Photo Caption Contest in July Issue

The prize is awarded to  
Miss S. Asifa Taj  
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Mysore State.

Winning Entry — 'Peaceful Conversation' — 'Silent Observation'

# HIMAL AND NAGRAI

—V. Ramesh.

Once there lived a poor brahmin in Anantnag in Kashmir. There the people worshipped the 'Nag' or snake. That is why the place was called Anantnag. The brahmin's wife was a bad-tempered woman. She was always quarrelling with him and scolding him. One day she said to him, "There is no grain in the house, so I cannot give you any food. Take your bag and go. Do not come back with an empty one."

The brahmin picked up his bag and went out in search of food. He walked for sometime and was tired. So he lay down on the grass and was soon fast asleep. While he was asleep a snake came out of the pool and got into his bag. When the brahmin woke up, he saw the snake inside the bag. "Good," he said, "I'll take it home and give it to her. It will teach her a lesson." So he tied up the bag with a string and went home. "Take it. It's not empty," he said to his wife.

The wife took the bag and

opened it only to find a snake. So she shrieked with fear. But suddenly the snake changed itself into a lovely little boy and said, "please don't be afraid. I'll be your child and you will be happy to have a lovely little son." He and his wife accepted the boy as their child and called him Nagrai, which means the King of the snakes.

As the years passed, Nagrai grew up to be a strong, handsome youngman. One day he quietly went near the king's palace and looked at the high walls around it. He saw a hole in one of the walls, changed himself into a snake and went in through the hole. Then he changed himself into Nagrai again and had a good swim in the royal bath. Afterwards he returned back to his house. He went out everyday to the palace and had a swim.

One day the princess, whose name was Himal, saw Nagrai bathing in the pool. "Oh! he is very handsome! He looks like celestial!" She said to herself.

At once she fell in love with him. She called her maid and said to her, "Follow that young man and find out everything about him." The maid did so and returned to the palace after enquiring about him. She told the princess, "His name is Nagrai. He is the son of a poor brahmin, but he is a very good boy and everybody likes him."



"Let him be the son of the poorest man in my father's kingdom. I am going to marry him," said the princess. "I have made up my mind about it." She told her parents about her decision. They were shocked to hear this. "How can our daughter marry a poor brahmin boy? What will our royal fold think of us?" they said. But she was firm on her decision. "I have chosen him to be my husband. I shall never marry any other", she said. So they gave their consent and the king sent for the brahmin. The brahmin came and the king said to him, "Princess Himal has made up her mind to marry your son Nagrai. Do you have any objection?" The brahmin trembled with fear and said "I agree, sir, but I am subject of yours and a poor man too. The princess should not marry a poor brahmin's son." "You are right," said the king, "but the princess is not going to change her mind. So go and make necessary arrangements for the wedding."

The brahmin went home and gave the news to his wife and foster-son. He looked very worried. Nagrai knew the cause of his worry and said, "Father, you are worried about

the arrangements for the marriage. Please cheer up. All will be well. Take this piece of birch-bark and drop it into the holy pool where you found me." The brahmin took the piece to the holy pool and dropped it in the water.

When he came back home, he couldn't find his humble dwelling. There was a grand palace in the place of his old hut and hundreds of soldiers in full uniform were standing in front of it. There were long lines of elephants and the servants were busy decorating them. Dozens of cooks were preparing food and hundreds of guests were feasting. Many young ladies were singing songs of love and joy inside the palace. Nagrai was dressed like a prince and his foster-mother like a queen. They came out and took the brahmin into a large room. Two servants helped him to dress up and he soon looked like a king.

The bridegroom's party arrived at the king's palace in the evening and Himal and Nagrai were married. After five days the party returned to the brahmin's palace with the bride and the groom. There was feasting, singing and dancing for several



days. Then the guests left for their homes.

Himal and Nagrai moved to a new palace, which the king had built for them. They had all the comforts of life. But their happiness soon came to an end.

Nagrai was the King of the snakes and had several snake queens. They lived in his palace at the bottom of the holy pool. When Nagrai did not return to them, they sent out their servants to spy on the King's whereabouts. They came back and told them the whole story. The snake queens became



very jealous and angry. One of them came out of the pool with a basket. There were many little things made of silver in it. Among them was the silver cup of Nagrai. She changed herself into a woman and came to Himal's palace. She showed her all the silver things from her basket and then said, "Please buy this cup. I am sure your husband will like it." Himal bought the cup and a few other things and the woman went away. Just then Nagrai came and Himal showed him the things which she had bought. He

looked at the cup and said, "Don't let the woman come here again. She may harm you".

The next day another snake queen came as a gypsy and met Himal. She asked Himal, "Does my husband Nagrai live here?" "Shut up," cried out Himal. "Nagrai is my husband. He is the son of the brahmin. You are a low caste woman. How can he be your husband? Get out of the place and never show your face again."

The gypsy got up and said, "I am going and I won't show my face again, but I must say that your husband has made a fool of you. Ask him to stand in the middle of the holy pool and say that he is a brahmin, he will never do it. Then you will understand what he is. Good-bye."

Himal did not believe the gypsy but she asked Nagrai many questions. He knew that his snake queens were poisoning Himal's mind against him. So he said angrily to her, "Don't listen to those woman. They are your enemies." But Himal was not happy. "Why don't you stand in the middle of the holy pool and say that you are a brahmin?" she said. "If you are a sincere man, no harm will

come to you." So Nagrai entered the pool. The snake queens, who were waiting for him caught hold of his legs and dragged him to the palace at the bottom. He was now a prisoner in the palace and could not come out of it for many days.

Himal was very unhappy. She gave up all comforts for prayer. She ate once in a day and gave alms to hermits and beggars. One day a hermit told her that he saw a most handsome young prince coming out of a holy pool with a plate of food which he placed under a tree saying "My dearest Himal, this is for you."

Himal felt very happy. She rushed to the tree and waited there for her dearest Nagrai. He came out of the pool at midnight and she fell at his feet. "I won't let you go now. Please take me with you to the bottom of the pool." "They will kill you," said he. "Be a good girl and go home. I will meet you here every night at this time." But Himal refused to go. So Nagrai changed her into a diamond and took her along.

But he could not deceive his

snake queens. They said, "We smell the flesh of a mortal. Where is it?" Nagrai replied, "If you let it stay here, I'll show it to you." The snake queens agreed and Nagrai changed the diamond into Himal. She stayed with the snake queens and served them as best as she could. But they hated her and treated her very badly. They did not give her enough to eat but always blamed her for one thing or the other. One day she boiled a pot of milk for their children and the hungry ones came and drank up the hot milk. The hot milk burnt their throats and all of them died in a few minutes. The snake queens blamed Himal for their death. They bit her and in a few seconds she died.

Nagrai was shocked when he saw the dead body. He embraced it and cried bitterly for a long time. Then he took the body out of the pool and put it carefully in the shade of a chinar tree. He went to the place everyday and wept for his beloved Himal. One day a hermit came that way and saw the beautiful dead body. He put the juice of some herbs into its mouth and the dead body

came to life. He took the girl to his hut in the forest.

When Nagrai came to the chinar tree that evening, he did not find his beloved's body there. He was very sad. He went back to the pool and sent his servants to look out for Himal's body. They came back in a few days and said to Nagrai, "Sir, Himal is alive and she's living in a hermit's hut in the forest." Nagrai was very happy to hear the news and so gave large rewards to the servants.

The next day Nagrai went to the hermit's hut as a snake. He found Himal asleep and lay down quietly beside her. A few minutes later, the hermit's son entered the room and saw the snake lying down beside Himal. He quickly brought a big stick and killed the snake. Himal woke up and cried, "Oh, you have killed my husband!" Then she started weeping.

The hermit and his son made a big fire and put the dead snake on it. Himal could not bear the grief and so jumped into the fire. In a short time both of them were burnt to ashes. The hermit was very sad. "I'm going to die, too," he said to himself. "The dear girl was more than a daughter to me,

yet I could not save her life. I have killed her and her husband." Just then he heard a voice saying. "Throw the ashes into the holy pool and Himal and Nagrai will be alive again." The hermit did so and saw a handsome prince and a beautiful princess coming out of the water. They were Himal and Nagrai. They bowed to the hermit and received his blessings. Then they went to the palace which the king had built for them and lived there happily for many, many years.



# THE THREE RASCALS

Once there lived in the city of Paris, three friends. They had no skill and no training and absolutely no desire to make a living for themselves by working hard. They were three good-for-nothing fellows, but they were quite lively and quite bright and they did not find it hard to make a living by using their wits. They were quick to take advantage of the not-so-bright people they came across, as they wandered around.

One day, the three friends were in the country and as they walked past a farmhouse, they saw the farmer's wife baking bread in a large oven outside the house.

The three friends sat down under a big, shady tree to rest, for they did not like to walk too far and the afternoon sun was hot. Also, they found it quite pleasant to watch other people working.

"Where have you come from?" asked the friendly farmer's wife, glad to have somebody to talk to.

The three friends sensed that she was a simple peasant woman,

who could easily be taken in and one of them replied, "Oh, we have just come from Heaven."

"From Heaven," replied the simple farmer's wife, amazed. "You don't say! Tell me, have you by any chance met my first son up there? His name was John."

"But of course we have met him," replied the rascal. "In



fact, he asked us if we could let him have any money, for he had spent all of his. Of course, we were able to make him a small loan."

"Oh dear," sighed the woman. "He never had any money when he was down here. I can see that it is exactly the same now that he is in Heaven."

She thought hard for a moment and then she said, "Will you be going back again?"

"Certainly," replied the rascal, "and if there is anything we can do for your son, don't

be afraid to say so, for we would be very happy to help you."

"Well," replied the woman, "if you would be so kind as to take these hundred silver pennies and this pair of shoes for him, I would be very grateful."

"With pleasure. It's no trouble at all," they assured her.

They took the hundred silver pennies and the pair of shoes and made off down the country lane, in the direction of Paris, chuckling to themselves.

Not long afterwards, the woman's husband arrived





home and as she could never keep a secret, she told him about the three men who had come from Heaven and how she had given them a hundred silver pennies, from the money she had made from selling her bread, to give to her first son, in Heaven.

"Stupid woman," roared her husband. "Could you not see that those were three rascals? From Heaven, indeed! A likely tale. Fetch my horse. I shall go after them and give them a good beating."

The farmer mounted his horse and set off along the road which the three rascals had taken.

While he was still some distance away, they heard the clip, cllop of horse's hooves on the road behind them. They guessed who he was and two of them quickly hid behind a hedge, but the third went over to a stone-breaker, who was working nearby. He persuaded the stone-breaker to lend him his jacket, hat and tools and in return gave him several silver pennies. Then he sent the stone-breaker away to hide.

When the farmer rode up, the rascal, dressed in the clothes he had borrowed from the stone-breaker, was busily breaking stone, as if he had been at it all his life.

The farmer stopped beside him. "Excuse me, my good man," he called down, "but have you seen three men go by this way?"

"Yes, I certainly have," replied the stone-breaker, as he stopped his work. "They were all laughing very merrily at something and they were carrying a pair of shoes—doubtless stolen from somewhere. They went in the direction of that wood, less than half an hour ago. If you hurry I am sure you will catch them."

"Thank you, my good man,"

said the farmer, "I will follow them straight away."

"Don't think you can go through that wood on horse-back, though," said the stone-breaker. "It is very thick in parts. The bushes are overgrown with creeper and some of them have sharp thorns which would tear your horse's flesh. You will have to push your way through thickets in some places, as well. You can leave your horse here with me, if you like. I will look after it until you return."

"You are very kind," said the foolish farmer. "I will do as you suggest. Here is my horse."

He dismounted, handed the reins to the stone-breaker and went on foot into the woods, which were very thick indeed. It was difficult for him to find any paths and he quickly became so lost that it was nightfall before he found his way back to the main road again. He had seen no sign of the three rascals and when he reached the main road, he found that the stone-breaker and his horse had gone, too.

Sadly, the farmer realized that he had been tricked. He set out to walk back home. It was very late when he returned and he was very tired.

"Well, did you catch the ruffians?" asked his wife when he walked in.

"Ruffians?" exclaimed the farmer, putting on an air of astonishment. "What ruffians? I found the three men you met and they were very good people. They really had come from Heaven. I even gave them my own horse, so that they could return to Heaven more quickly and give the money and the shoes to poor John."

In fact, the farmer was so ashamed of his own stupidity that he never did confess to his wife how he had been tricked and she, poor woman, never guessed.



# TEJIMALA

— Miss. Champa Gurnani

Once there was a rich merchant who lived in a village in Assam. He had a beautiful daughter. Her name was Tejimala. Her mother died when she was a baby and her father married again. Tejimala's stepmother was a cruel and wicked woman. She did not like Tejimala and so treated her with utmost cruelty. But Tejimala was sweet and good. She obeyed her stepmother and did everything she was asked to do. She swept the house, cleaned the pots and vessels, went to the forest to gather firewood and did all kinds of work. Yet her stepmother always found some fault with her and beat her severely.

Tejimala's father was a businessman and was often away on long journeys to sell his goods.

Tejimala grew up into a lovely woman and her father began to think of finding a suitable husband for her. He travelled far and wide in search of a bridegroom. At last he found a very handsome young man. Before

the marriage took place, however, he felt that the young man should acquire some experience in the world. So he took him along in one of his long journeys. They travelled through many countries and saw many great cities.

In his absence, Tejimala was left at the mercy of her cruel stepmother. She was made to work more and more and was given only rags to wear. She was not given enough food to eat and was beaten whenever her mother felt to do so. But Tejimala bore all her sufferings with courage. She said not a word against her stepmother.

One day the stepmother asked Tejimala to help her in husking paddy. But as she pushed the paddy forward, her stepmother dropped the heavy pestle on the poor girl's head. And thus Tejimala died. Her stepmother wailed and cried making the neighbours believe that Tejimala died of an accident. The neighbours showed their sym-

pathy and buried the poor girl in the garden.

After a few days a creeper grew over the grave. It grew longer and longer. It was a pumpkin vine and bore many large ones. One day a passerby wanted to steal one of them. But as he did so a voice said, "Oh! Please don't touch me. I am not a pumpkin. I am Tejimala." The man was so frightened that he ran away. The wicked stepmother too heard what the pumpkin said. At once she destroyed the plant. But a chilli plant grew where the pumpkin creeper had been. It was covered with red and green chillies. Cowherds passing that way tried to pick up some chillies.



Again a voice pleaded, "Please do not touch me. I am not a chilli plant, but I am Tejimala." The cowherds thought it was a ghost who was speaking and they ran away for safety. Tejimala's stepmother then destroyed the plant and threw it away in the river. A lovely lotus grew in the river where the chilli plant had fallen.

It chanced that Tejimala's father and the young man were returning home sailing down the river in the boat. When the young man saw the beautiful lotus, he stretched out his hand to pluck it. "Please do not touch me," said the flower, "I am not a lotus. I am Tejimala who has been killed by her stepmother." Tejimala's father was shocked to hear these words.

"I am your father returning home," he cried. "Come to me, my dear, Teji."

On hearing her father's affectionate voice, the lovely flower suddenly changed into Tejimala. She ran into her father's arms and told him the whole story.

They all returned home. Teji's father drove the wicked stepmother out of the house. She then married the young man and they lived happily ever after.



## BOY AND THE GHOST

The king was playing chess with his Prime Minister in his private chamber, when a guard came in, bowed in reverence and said, "Your Highness, a villager solicits an audience with Your Majesty."

"Show him in," commanded the king.

A pale and frightened villager came in. He bowed before the king and said, "I am from Kaisarpur village, Your Majesty. Our village and those around are in trouble."

"What's the trouble?" asked the Prime Minister. He too was fidgety at the interruption, as the game had reached a very interesting point.

"The trouble is a strange ghost has appeared in our

village. It is bigger than the biggest tree. It harms none."

"And that troubles you!" asked the Prime Minister.

"No, Your Excellency," said the villager, "what I mean to say is, it harms no living creature directly. It lives on leaves, grass and crops. It goes on eating. If it were not stopped, the day would come when we should have neither fodder for our cattle nor grain for us all. It is operating in the village since eight days and has eaten fifty acres of standing crop."

"It's a real threat to us all," the king became serious. "Yes, Your Majesty," the Prime Minister also showed concern.

"Why have you come so late?" asked the king.

"In the mean time, our witch doctors in the village tried hard to imprison the ghost in a jar. But it didn't yield. They said as it was an uncommon one living only on vegetation it was a hard nut for them," the villager answered.

The Court Exorcist was immediately summoned. He also agreed with the views of the witch doctors and added that if the ghost could be made to taste the human blood, he could easily imprison it in a jar and throw it into the deep sea.

The king, thinking that the ghost may not like to suck the blood of the weak and slim villagers, ordered stout prisoners, who were sentenced to death to be offered to the ghost.

The ghost received them happily played and danced with them. It took them to its underground palace, served them with fruits and wine. And then politely asked them to go to hell and not to disturb him. The king and the whole kingdom were worried about the growing peril. Even the wise in the kingdom were helpless in the matter. The king proclaimed that anybody who imprisoned the ghost would get a handsome reward.

One fine morning, a twelve-

year lad presented himself before the king and said, "I can arrest the ghost, Your Majesty," the boy responded respectfully.

"How can you arrest the ghost?" the Court Exorcist asked. "It is an uncommon ghost. The magic words...."

"Enough of your magic, Sir," the boy interrupted. "I have two things which are more powerful than the magic."

"What are they?" The Court Exorcist demanded angrily. He felt offended.

"The brain and strong will," the boy said humbly.

"Well said, my boy," the king applauded his answer.

"Your Majesty, I wish to get twelve chariots, a glass jar, a band of musicians and two or three hundred well dressed people riding on horses to arise the curiosity of the ghost."

"Your request is granted," said the king. After an hour, the procession led by the boy left for the jungle haunted by the ghost. The band was playing a happy tune. When they reached the jungle, the ghost was sitting on a big tree, its legs touching the ground.

"Hey guys!" inquired the ghost merrily, "Where are you going?"

"To the king," answered the boy.

"Why?"

"To make him a strange and tiny offer."

"What is that?"

"I am afraid, I can't tell you."

"Why, little creature?"

"My mother has made me promise that I would not tell anybody of the strange offer. And kind Sir, would you like me to be unfaithful to my word?"

"Oh, no, certainly not," said the ghost nodding its big head.

"My kind Sir, if you are so curious about it you can see it for yourself. I'll tell you nothing. Thus I'll not be unfaithful to my word."

"You are good and clever," said the ghost cheerfully. "Now let me see the strange offer." The boy showed him the jar.

"It's only a glass jar, my boy!"

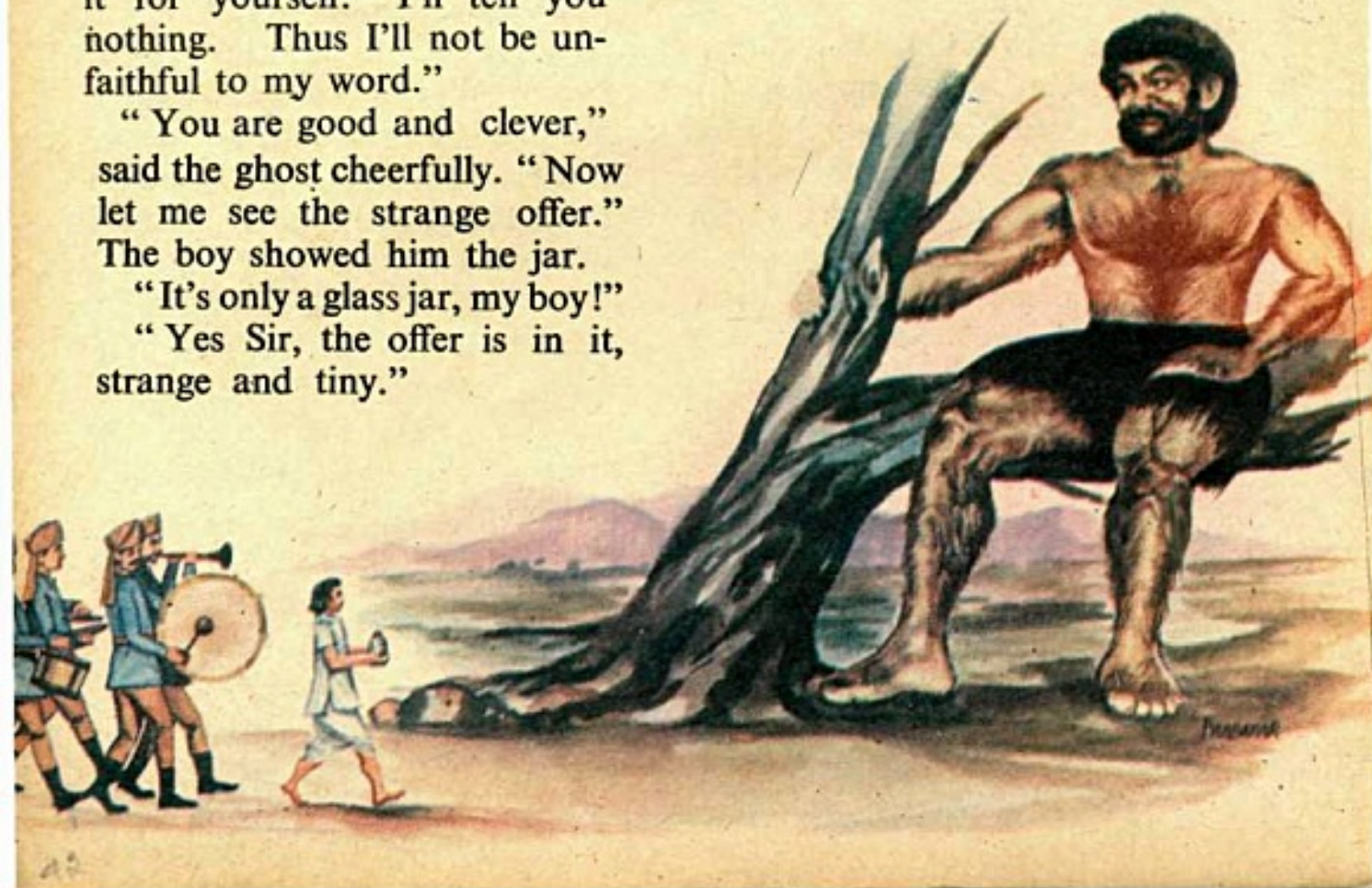
"Yes Sir, the offer is in it, strange and tiny."

The ghost peeped in but could see nothing.

"You can't see it from outside, Sir. You'll have to go in. But do no harm, kind Sir."

"I am a harmless creature, my boy."

So saying, it shrank to the size of a mouse and jumped into the jar. The boy closed the jar instantly. The ghost was imprisoned. The band played a happier tune, and back they marched to the king triumphantly with a strange and tiny offer in the jar.





## The Mystery of Vanishing Children

One day, King Surasena of Malay was walking along the shores of the sea that bordered his kingdom. He was a great and powerful warrior and his fame had spread to all the neighbouring lands.

Just then he saw a giant crossing the waters with great strides. Soon the colossus stood before the King.

Rather surprised, Surasena asked, "Hallo, who are you and what do you want?" The giant replied, "I come from the island of the lions. My king sent me here. I believe that a great warrior called Surasena lives here. I have come to see him."

Surasena said, "Oh! Is that so, very well, state your business and I shall inform the King. You see, he is not here at the

moment. He has gone out hunting."

The giant said, "Well, the fact of the matter is someone keeps on kidnapping the new born babes of my master. Despite the strongest precautions, someone regularly steals them away. The king has lost two children in this manner. Now the queen is expecting her third baby and naturally the king is worried. In order to save this baby, he seeks the assistance of Surasena." Surasena replied, "Alright. I'll inform our King of your request."

The giant waded back into the sea and Surasena turned back. Just then eight dwarfs ran towards him. Surprised the King accosted them.

"Why do you run so?" asked



the King. One of the dwarfs replied, "We are men of miraculous powers. My name is Holdfast. If I catch somebody, then I stick to him like a leech. He can never be rid of me. Moreover, I am so strong that no one can budge me."

Surasena stooped and tried to lift the dwarf with all his strength. But no matter how hard he tried, he could not move the dwarf.

Then another came forward and said, "I am known as Long Ears. No matter how far away the sound I can hear it perfectly." The third one said, "They call me Long Sight. I can see even the tiniest ant far far away."

The fourth one said, "I am called Keen Brain. I can find out anything that happens anywhere in the world." The fifth one said, "I am called Long Arm. I can pick anyone's pocket without arousing the least suspicion. The sixth one said, "I am known as Crawl Anywhere. I can squeeze myself into the tiniest hole in the ground."

The seventh one said, "They call me Good Aim. I can bring down the tiniest fly with my bow and arrow.

And the eighth added, "They call me Tiny Brahma. I can create any object from the tiniest blade of grass."

Glad to hear all this, Surasena said, "Look here, men, would you like to accompany me to the Island of the Lions? I am going there to help the king of the island out of a strange difficulty."

The dwarfs chorused their agreement to his proposal.

Next day, Surasena gave Tiny Brahma a blade of grass and asked him to make a ship out of it. Hey Presto! and the next minute beautiful ship floated lazily on the waters. All of them went aboard and Surasena set sail for the Island of the Lions.

The king of the Island gave Surasena and his companions a warm welcome and received them hospitably. That night the queen of the Island of Lions gave birth to their third child. The king turned to Surasena and said, "To-night we must be careful."

Surasena replied, "Don't worry. I shall protect your child. If I fail, I shall forfeit my life."

The new born babe was put in a separate room and heavily guarded. Surasena himself kept a close vigil in the room. Then he asked Keen Brain about the mysterious kidnappings of the new-born royal children.

Keen Brain said, "It is the sister of this king who is doing this. She is a great sorceress. She comes like a wisp of smoke through the chimney, then elongates her hand and snatches the baby, cradle and all. All the other children are in her palace in the Island of Magic."

So Surasena asked Hold Fast to sit near the fireplace, directly under the Chimney. Everyone waited tensely for the night.

The midnight hour struck and a wisp of smoke filtered through the chimney. Hold Fast grabbed it and the witch could not budge her arm. In the struggle that ensued she lost her arm. Hold Fast and the other picked



up the arm and were examining it, when another arm snaked through the chimney and picking up the baby vanished.

Noticing this Surasena and his men jumped into their ship and raced towards the Island of Magic.

Then Crawl Anywhere hefted Long Arm in his shoulders and both of them arrived at the Sorceress's Castle. Through a window of the Castle, they saw three children playing in a room. Long Arm extended his arm and picking up the children returned to the ship.

When the Sorceress discovered her loss she howled dismally and ran towards the ship.

Good Aim saw her coming towards the ship like a whirlwind and quickly notching an arrow aimed for her right eye as Keen Brain had told him that contained the essence of her life.

The arrow struck the right eye, of the witch and she fell into the sea with a resounding splash. Then she drowned.

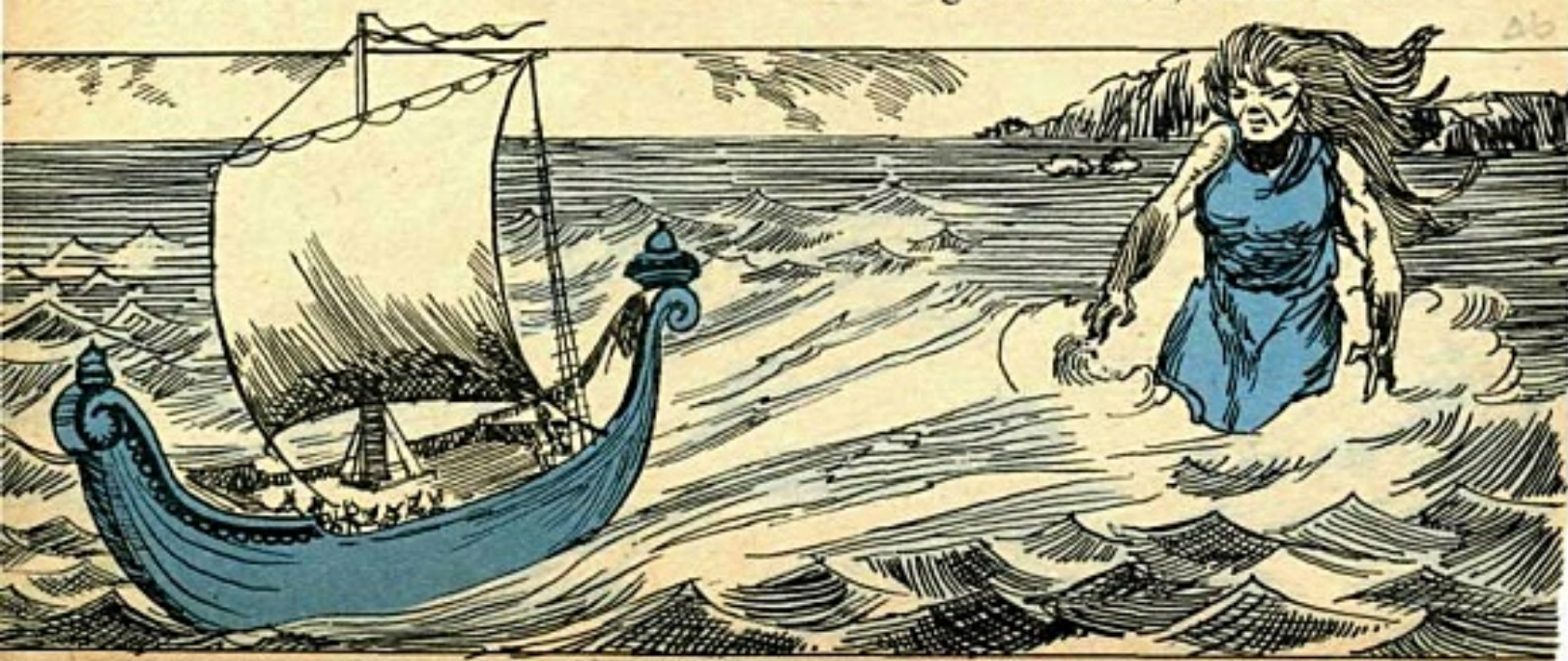
Surasena returned to the Palace in the early hours of the morning and left the children in the same room.

What was the delight of the king to see not only his new born babe alive and well but his other children also!

Surasena related all that had happened.

The king became furious to learn that his own sister had caused all the mischief. He felt glad when Surasena informed him of her death.

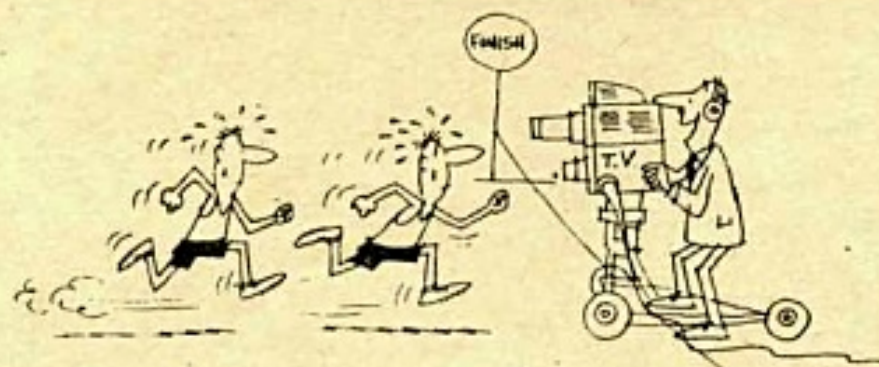
The king of the Island of the Lions rewarded Surasena and his men handsomely. After some pleasant days spent in this Island Surasena returned to his own kingdom and lived happily with his good friends, the dwarfs.



# WHAT'S YOUR SCORE?

1. *The President of Yugoslavia is known as Marshal Tito. What was his original name?*
2. *Which famous artist is believed to have cut off his own ear?*
3. *What is the title of the French National Anthem?*
4. *What is the scientific name for the white of an egg?*
5. *After whom is Wednesday named?*
6. *What is the name of the capital of Finland?*
7. *How many legs does the common crab have?*
8. *Who was given the name 'The Fuehrer'?*
9. *After the moon our nearest neighbour is twentyfive million miles away. Which planet is it?*
10. *English uses the Roman alphabet. What is the Russian alphabet called?*
11. *Does sound travel faster in air or under water?*
12. *Would a thick or thin glass tumbler withstand boiling water better?*
13. *Which chemical substance causes the green colour of plants?*
14. *Which German town has given its name to a perfume?*
15. *True or false: Only the female bee stings; Only the female wasp stings.*

**Now Turn to Page 20 and Check your score!**



"Smile please!"



## THE SELFISH BEGGAR

In a certain village lived a poor fellow called Ashok. He was so poor that he could not feed and clothe his family properly. He decided to leave the village and earn his livelihood somewhere else.

But try as he might, no one would employ him because he had grown thin and weak from repeated starvation. He got so disgusted with his lot that he determined to end his life and jumped into a swiftly flowing river.

But a kindly sage rescued him from a watery grave and brought him ashore. Hearing Ashok's sad tale, the sage said, "I shall teach you a magic spell. But you can use it only for the first three days. Recite this spell and fill your house with food and other items. After the third day, you must teach someone else the spell."

Accordingly Ashok came

home and recited the spell. Lo and behold! his house soon overflowed with grains and all the other things that he and his family had lacked all these days.

On the fourth day, he saw a beggar lying in front of his house. The latter was dying of starvation. Ashok remembered the advice of the sage. So he roused the beggar and whispered the spell into his ears. Then he said, "You will get what you desire for three days. On the fourth day you must whisper this spell into the ears of someone else. Thus you can prevent the whole world from starving to death."

The beggar went home and experimented with the spell. Soon his humble dwelling was overflowing with food grains. Suddenly he had a mean idea. If all the rice in the kingdom could be stocked up in one

place he need never fear of starvation.

So he wished that all the rice would come to his dwelling and so it happened. Folks in the kingdom saw to their bewilderment their stocks of rice disappearing before their very eyes.

Now this beggar did not teach anyone else the secret of the spell. He was so selfish that he wanted all the riches of the world for himself.

Now the whole kingdom was plunged into gloom, because not a grain of rice was left anywhere. Even the king's granary loomed large and empty.

The king was alarmed at this and sent his officers around to find out what had happened.

They went round but could not discover anything. At about this time a pack of rats were seen going towards the forest. Soon other rats followed; big, small, lean, fat, thin, round and hungry ones. Puzzled by this behaviour of the rats, the king ordered his officers to follow them.

The rats made for the dwelling of the beggar and there the royal officials discovered a mountain of rice. The beggar couple was arrested and brought

before the king who angrily demanded to know why and how they had hoarded so much food.

The beggar fell at the feet of the king and implored forgiveness. He related how he had nearly starved to death and how Ashok had saved him. It was the latter who had taught him the magic spell which had given him all the food in the kingdom.

The king sent for Ashok and enquired whether the beggar's version was true.

So Ashok replied, "Sire, a venerable sage taught me this spell. It would work only for three days. On the fourth day, the spell must be taught to someone, else it will lose its power. I taught this beggar to chant the spell and advised him to pass it on to someone else. But obviously this selfish fellow did not follow my advice. His greed got the better of him and he nearly brought the people of this land to rack and ruin."

The king became angry at this account of the beggar's meanness and greed. So he sent the beggar couple to the dungeons. All the rice stored by them was distributed among the people. Ashok was rewarded for his honesty.

# SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

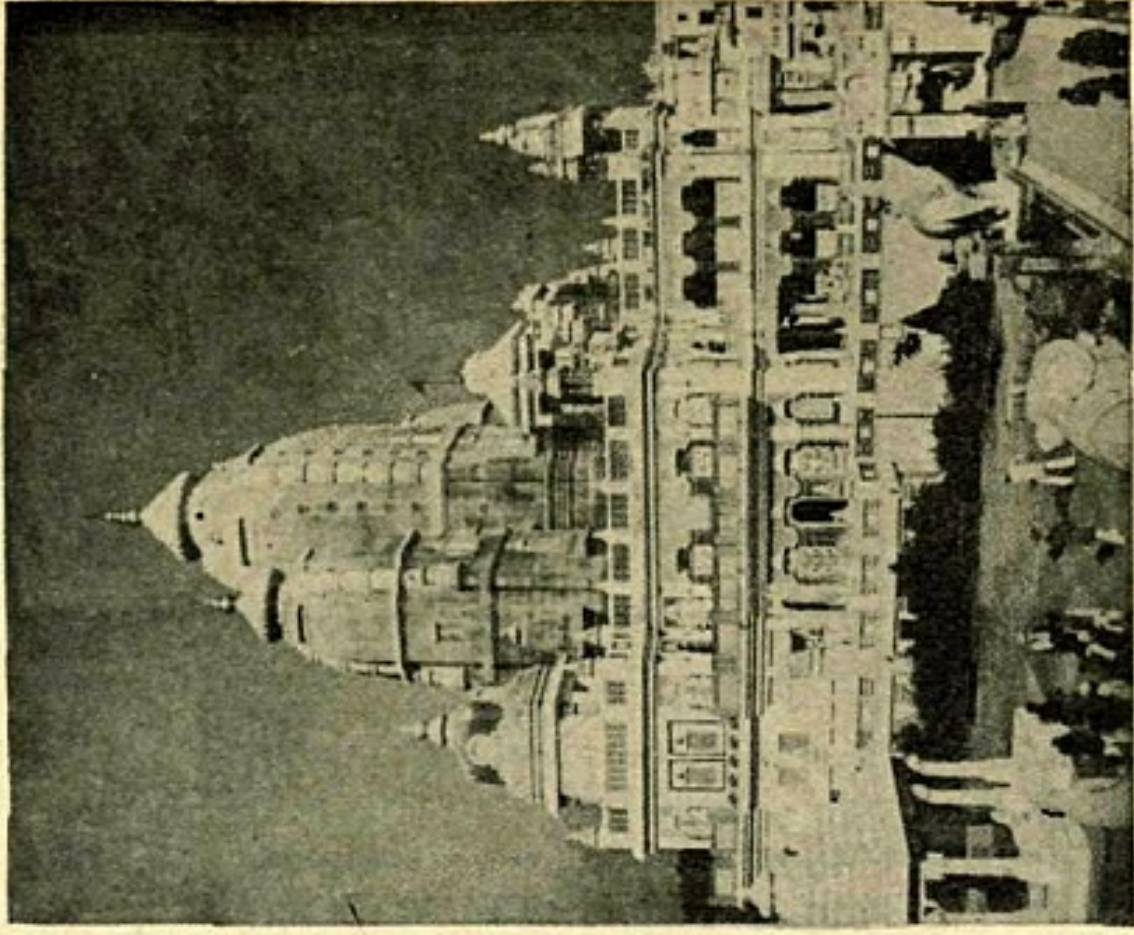
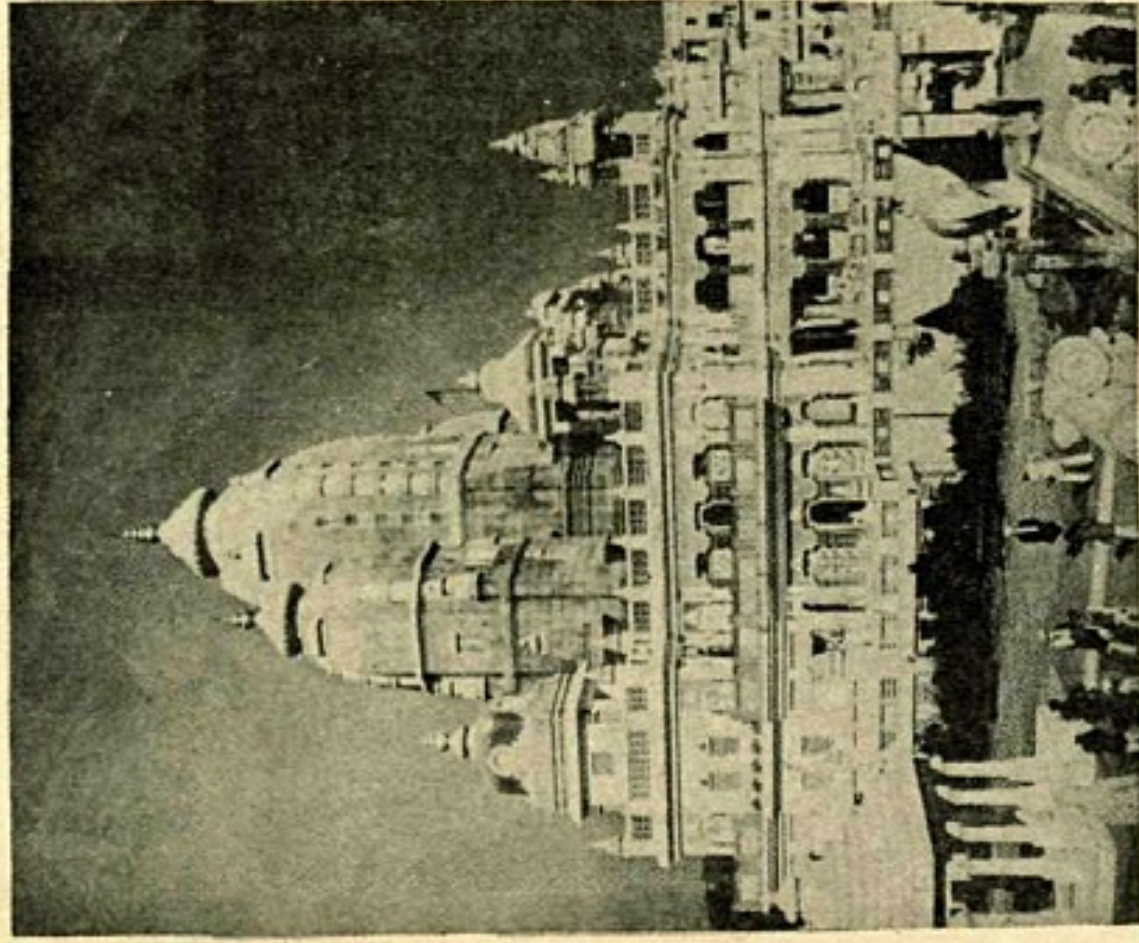


Photo by Mr. B. Bhanthall

This is the famous Birla Temple in New Delhi. We have masked 10 spots of the temple for your entertainment. Spot them out!



## MAHABHARATA

*The story so far ...*

*Sages and elders at the Court advised Duryodhana to make peace with the Pandavas and live in amity with them. But all this advice fell deaf on the ears of Duryodhana, who refused to give Pandavas even an inch of ground that belonged to him. Flushing in anger at the unpalatable words of Lord Krishna, he left the Court only to return with armed soldiers to arrest the Lord. Then the Lord grew into unmeasurable stature to show Duryodhana of his immense strength.*

The awe-inspiring sight of Lord Krishna made Dhritarashtra cry out hoarsely, "Lord, after having seen Your Majesty and splendour, I have no desire

to set eyes on anything else. Take back your bounty."

The cosmic vision of Lord Krishna lasted an instant and then vanished. Everything became as before, and Dhritarashtra turned blind once more. Lord Krishna accompanied by Satyaki and Vidura left the Court.

Dhritarashtra, rather crestfallen at Duryodhana's conduct, spoke humbly to the departing emissary of the Pandavas.

"Lord, do not think ill of me. I have nothing against the Pandavas. You heard the good advice I gave to Duryodhana!"

Then Lord Krishna looked at the Peers earnestly and said, "Lords, you were witnesses to Duryodhana's conduct and speech in the Court today.

Dhritarashtra could do nothing. Therefore, there is nothing more for me to do here. I bid you farewell."

Then getting into the chariot driven by Dharuka, Lord Krishna went to Kuntidevi's palace. He related to her all that had happened at the Court. He said, "Duryodhana has become blind to his own fate. Kauravas will soon be destroyed. I shall consult the Pandavas and prepare for what must be. Do you have any messages for them?"

Kunti spoke sorrowfully, "What advice can I give to Yudhishtira? He will never behave unjustly. Moreover, the

Kshathriyas do not believe in charity. They will win what is theirs through personal valour. It is not proper that my sons should live like mendicants. Pandavas must regain their territories through force. This is all that I have to say to them."

Then Lord Krishna bade farewell to all his friends, and taking Karna with him drove out of the city.

As they were passing the outskirts of the city, Lord Krishna turned to Karna and said, "Karna, you are intelligent. You have the power to discern things. Though you were born to Kunti as a result of an immaculate conception, the man she married was truly your father. Therefore, you are the first born of King Pandu and deserve to rule over the territories of the Pandavas. Both on the maternal side, as well as on the paternal one which is descended from the race of the Vrishni, the Pandavas are your close kinsfolk. Come with me, you will be sovereign of all the lands. Yudhishtira will serve you as a vassal lord. Kuntidevi's heart will be gladdened."

Karna replied, "Lord, I know you mean well. Your love for me prompts you to give me such



advice. I know I am Pandu's son, but Kuntidevi abandoned me at birth and I was set afloat in a box, while yet a babe. Adhiratha, the charioteer who rescued me from my state and his wife Radha have lavished all their affection on me. I know no other parents other than those two. They called me Vasusena and married me off to a maiden from their race. Duryodhana has been my friend and has stood by me all these years. He has requested me to engage Arjuna in single combat. I cannot think of betraying his trust. I have no doubt that the Pandavas will ultimately win because you are on their side. If Yudhishtira knows the truth about my birth, he would unhesitatingly yield up his right to all the territories. But even if I had the world in my grasp, I would give it to Duryodhana willingly. Therefore, I cannot abandon him."

Lord Krishna smiled compassionately at the emotional outburst of Karna.

"So be it then. Now war will surely begin on the day the full moon vanishes. Go and tell this to Bhishma and Drona."

Then Lord Krishna left for Upablavya.



Meanwhile Vidura hastened to Kuntidevi and said, "That which we did not wish for has come to pass. War between the Pandavas and the Kauravas is certain. Lord Krishna's peace mission has failed."

Kuntidevi was alarmed at the thought that great men like Bhishma and Drona might perish in the ensuing battle. She sought about for ways and means to stop the conflict. Finally she decided to prevail upon Karna to drop out of the fight as without his support Duryodhana would not dare to oppose the Pandavas.

One day she went to Karna as the latter was deep in medi-

tation on the banks of the river Ganga.

Karna looked up and saw her standing forlornly before him. Hastily he got up and bowed reverently. Then he said, "Mother, I am glad to see you. But tell me what you desire?"

Kunti replied, "Karna, know that you are my first born. You side with Duryodhana without knowing that the Pandavas are your own brothers. Kauravas usurped the territories of the Pandavas. Get back the territories from them and you can rule over land and sea. You and Arjuna can live in brotherly amity as Krishna and Balarama do. This will solve all knotty problems."

Karna pondered over her words long and silently. Then he spoke heavily, "Mother, it cannot be as you say. You abandoned me to the river as soon I was born. Though I was born a Kshatthriya, fate willed that I should be known to the world as the son of a lowly-born charioteer. Moreover, you did not bother about me all these years. Now you want me to go over to the Pandavas. If on the eve of the battle, I do what you desire the world will

mock me and call me an ingrate. The Kauravas have always regarded me as one of their own. Duryodhana has thrown the gauntlet down before the Pandavas because I stand beside him. I cannot betray that trust. If need be, I'll give up my life in their cause."

"Mother, I understand your concern. Therefore, I promise not to harm the other Pandavas barring Arjuna whom I have sworn to kill."

Hot tears rolled down Kunti-devi's cheeks. She spoke brokenly, "Karna, fate is very unkind. Kauravas will surely be destroyed. But I must be satisfied with your promise that you will spare four of the five Pandavas. God bless you."

Brooding over her words, Karna watched her go back to the palace with faltering steps.

In Upablavya, Lord Krishna related his experiences at Hastinapura to the furious Pandavas.

It was decided to form the legions for the ensuing battle. The Pandavas had seven legions, and each one was commanded by a redoubtable warrior.

Virata, Drupada, Dhrishtadyumna, Sikandi, Satyaki and Chekidana commanded the seven legions. But someone



had to be appointed Chief of Staff to co-ordinate the battle plans. Lord Krishna was asked to nominate a suitable person for the job. So he said, "Let us choose Dhrishtadyumna. He alone can oppose Lord Bhishma successfully."

Pandavas and their allies welcomed this proposal. Now it only remained for the Pandava army to engage the enemy. With the piercing sounds of conch shells and war horns preceding them, the cavalries and the elephant legions made their way to the front. They were followed by Bhima, Nakula and Sahadeva. Surrounded by his faithful guards and flanked by Dhrishtadyumna, Abhimanyu, and the Upapandavas, Yudhishtira drove through the army in his war chariot.

The supply train brought up the rear, and included the medical corps and the other civilian ranks.

Draupadi and her maids remained at Upablavya. Before the army moved out, Pandavas performed thanks-giving ceremonies and gave away cattle and wealth to the poor to mark the auspicious start.

Forty thousand chariots, two lakh horses, sixty thousand elephants, and five lakh soldiers comprised the Grand Army which rolled across the plains like a mighty sea surging forward with unsuppressed fury and vigour towards its Armageddon at Kurukshetra.

The hollow notes of the conch shells and the resounding war cries of the fierce soldiers mingled with the morning air as dawn broke over Kurukshetra.

(Contd.)





## THE LUCKY HAND

Long ago a certain merchant's wife died leaving behind a son for the father to bring up. This he did with great care and lavished all his affection on the lad.

After a few days the merchant fell ill. His condition worsened and the doctors said that he would not live. So he called his son and said, "Son, even if you touch sand, it must turn into gold. This is what I wish."

After the death of his father, the young man went into business and soon made a huge profit. Then he remembered his father's advice. He thought all his wealth was because of his father's dying injunction to him. As he did not desire to amass wealth he began to buy goods at higher prices and sell them at cheaper rates. Then he bought a lot of dates and sold them for much less in Egypt.

The king of Egypt heard about this strange business practice and summoned the young man to him.

"Young man," he said, "Who are you? Why do you sell your goods for a loss and lose all your money?"

"Your Majesty, just before his death my father said that whatever I touched would turn into gold. When I plunged into business, I made enormous profits. As I did not like the idea of amassing wealth, I have strated buying at higher prices and selling at lower rates to reduce my profits."

The king said, "Is that so? I am not sure that I believe what you say."

The young man protested and said, "Your Majesty, I swear on the Almighty that what I have said is true."

Then as though to prove his words he bent down and picked up a handful of dust. As he



poured it from his hand, a shining object fell out.

The king quickly asked, "Hallo, What is that?"

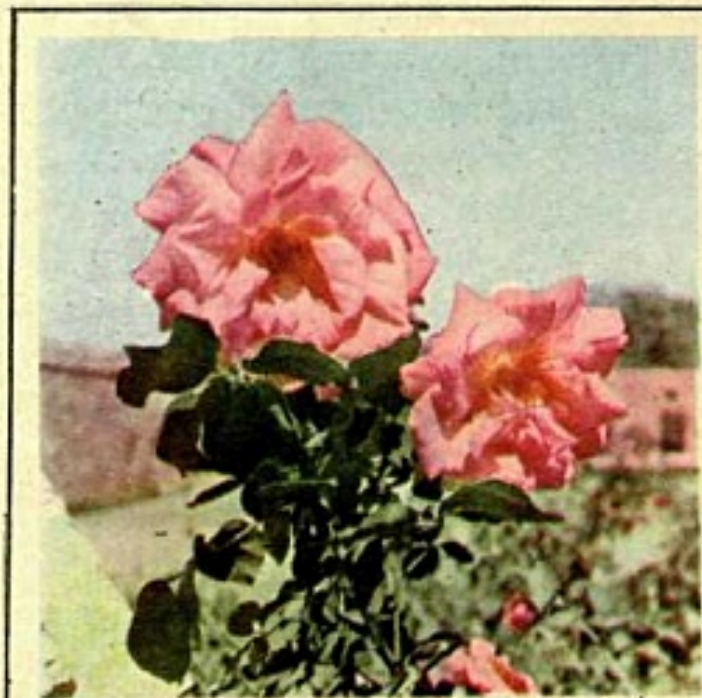
The young man replied, "I think it is a gold ring."

In truth it was indeed the gold ring of the king which he had lost sometime ago. However hard everyone searched for it, no one could find it. But

now the young man had found it.

Overjoyed the king said, "Young man, I believe you now. Your father was right. You have indeed a lucky hand. Therefore I shall marry of my daughter to you and may you live happily with her."

Thus the young man married the princess and in later years became the King of Egypt.



## FLOWER

Flowers are the sweetest things that God ever made and forgot to put a soul into.

— Henry Ward Beecher



## KOELI AND THE OGRE

Long ago there lived in a certain city a poor family consisting of father, mother and three daughters. They were so poor that often they starved. Obviously, this could not go on, so the parents called their three daughters and said,

"All of you are old enough to earn your own bread. As we are no longer able to feed you go and work and earn your livelihood."

The daughters chorused, "We shall do as you say. We can't bear to see you suffer anymore."

Then all three set out for the neighbouring kingdom to earn a living. Their way lay through a thick jungle, but undaunted they pressed on. Soon they came to a cottage in the heart of the forest. As they were tired, they knocked on the door.

Slowly the door opened and a woman stood before them. As soon as she saw them, she exclaimed, "Alas! what evil fortune brings you here. My husband is an Ogre. If he sees you, he'll gobble you up."

The girls cried out, "We are not afraid. Tomorrow morning we'll go away, but till then pray, let us tarry here, because we are tired and can walk no further."

The Ogre's wife replied, "Very well. I'll feed you, but don't tarry here. Here danger awaits you. Don't say I didn't warn you."

The girls ate the food given to them by the kindly woman and were just getting up when the Ogre announced his arrival by a loud bellow. His wife quickly hid the three girls in a corner.

The Ogre entered and sniffing the air exclaimed, "Aha! I smell the blood of humans here." His wife replied, "Don't be silly. All you can think of is human blood. Eat your food and sleep."

So the Ogre sat down to eat. His wife brought out the three girls from their corner and presented them before her husband.

"They are good girls, but have lost their way. They'll stay here to-night and sleep along side our three daughters."

The Ogre's eyes glittered evilly when he heard this but he said nothing.

At night when everyone was preparing to sleep, the Ogre stealthily tied three beaded necklaces round the throats of his daughters. Then he lay down and soon began to snore. Now, Koeli the youngest of the three sisters had noticed this strange action of the Ogre. Quickly she untied the necklaces from the necks of the Ogre's daughters and tied them round herself and her two sisters. Then she pretended to sleep.

As the midnight hour struck, the Ogre got up and picking up the girls whose necks were bare, gobbled them up. He did not realise that they were his



own daughters. Then he went out of the house. As soon as he had gone Koeli got up and waking her sisters told them what had happened. Then all three left the Ogre's house hurriedly and made their way to the neighbouring kingdom. There they went to the King and said, "Your Majesty. You must save us from a fierce Ogre who will come looking for us."

The King replied, "Ah! Yes. That Ogre! He's very powerful. But I desire the magic sword which he possesses. If you can bring it to me, I'll kill him very easily."

The sisters were perplexed to hear this. Then Koeli agreed to bring back the Ogre's sword.

The King was overjoyed to hear this and said, "Good. If you bring back that sword, I'll marry my son to your eldest sister."

Koeli left the sisters in the care of the King and went to the forest. She slipped into the Ogre's house when no one was noticing her and hid under his bed.

The Ogre came back in the night and stretching himself on the bed was soon fast asleep. Then Koeli crept out and slowly withdrawing the sword from his side ran to the door with it. But the sword was too big and she stumbled with it on the stone step. It made a clanging noise and the Ogre woke up, saw his sword missing and gave hot chase.

Koeli ran like the wind and the Ogre could not keep pace with her. She came to a gorge the two sides of which were connected by a taut rope. She stepped nimbly on the rope and walked across. But the Ogre could not follow because the rope would not bear his weight.

He howled in anger and disappointment. "Grrrr...", he gritted his teeth. "I'll kill you the next time I see you here,"



he bellowed.

Koeli only laughed and made faces at him. Then she ran to the palace and gave the sword to the King.

"Good. But I have another task for you. That Ogre possesses a magic bag. Bring it to me, and I'll marry my second son to your elder sister," he said.

Again Koeli went back to the Ogre's house and hid under the bed. At night the Ogre stamped into the room and shoved his leather bag under his pillow. Then he began to snore as usual. Koeli crept out and slowly pulled the bag free from the pillow. Then she ran out of the house. But in her haste,

she knocked over a stool and the Ogre woke up. As before, he tried to catch her, but she eluded him easily and reached the gorge safely.

"Next time, you won't get away from me," shouted the angry Ogre. "If I catch you, I'll..."

"Gobble me up! Is that it," laughed Koeli. "But first you have to catch me."

Then Koeli gave the bag to the King. He rejoiced in her victory but said, "Well done, I have yet one more final task for you. If you can bring back the Ogre's magic ring, I'll marry my youngest son to you."

Poor Koeli agreed to do this and once more went to the Ogre's house, where as before she hid under the bed. As usual the Ogre returned at night and stretched out upon the bed. When she heard him snoring, she got up and tried to draw the ring from his finger. Quick as flash, the Ogre opened his eyes and caught Koeli as she was about to make off with his ring.

"Aha! At last, I've caught you.

Now I'll gobble you up," chortled the Ogre.

The quick witted Koeli replied, "Oh! alright. But If I had caught you, do you know what I'd have done?"

His curiosity aroused, the slow-witted Ogre asked, "And what would you have done?"

Koeli answered, "I'd put you in a bag throw in a pair of scissors. Then I'd tie the mouth of the bag and with sharp sticks beat the sides until you die."

The Ogre thought this a moral way of dealing with his enemy. So he tied Koeli up in a bag and left a pair of scissors inside. Then he went into the forest to gather sharp sticks. In the meanwhile, Koeli cut her way out of the bag with the scissors and picking up the magic ring which the Ogre had forgotten, ran speedily back to the King.

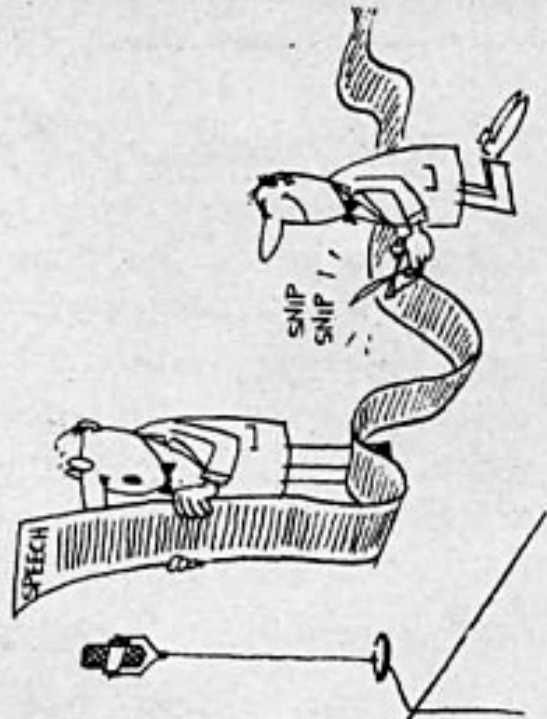
The King was very happy to see her and as he had promised married off his three sons to the three sisters who now began to live happily in the palace.

As for the Ogre, that was the last anybody ever heard of him.





"Speaking personally, I prefer to ignore hecklers."



"Jones has a reputation for making these forceful attacking speeches!"



### To Subscribers . . .

Address-changes are recorded during the first week so as to see that subscriber mailing of the different CHANDAMAMAs commencing in the second week is not delayed. For this same reason requests received after 5th have often to be held over till the next mailing. It would, therefore, be convenient if changes in addresses are communicated to us at the month-beginning.

We seek your co-operation.

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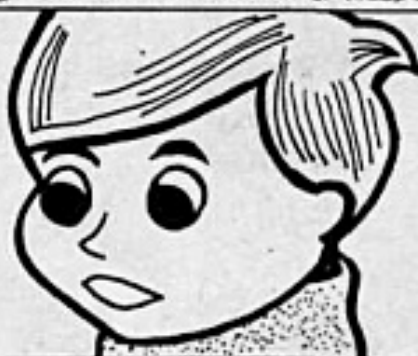
# Playing it right...

We played a cricket match in school today Daddy. But I got out very soon.

Why son,  
what  
happened?



Sunil bowled a short ball. I tried to cut, but edged a catch to the wicket-keeper.



Bad luck! But there are other strokes to deal with short balls. For instance, you can play the hook. Move to your right so that the ball comes high up at your left. Hit with an upward swing of the bat.



And if you hit with full force you will swing round completely. You may even find yourself facing the wicket-keeper!



Now then, it's nearly eight-thirty, son. Off to bed. Have you brushed your teeth?

I washed  
my  
mouth  
after  
dinner,  
Dad.



That won't do son. You must brush your teeth every night and morning, to remove all decay-causing food particles. You must also massage the gums so they'll be healthy and strong.



Yes, Daddy.



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# Wild Life



**W**

for Wolf. Before man started breeding dogs, the wolf was the only real dog. It is found all over the world from the frozen arctic regions to the equatorial regions of Africa.